Profile of English Proficiency among Senior High School English Teachers in Banda Aceh

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ABSTRACT : English proficiency is the ability to communicate efficiently by using English both in spoken and written contexts. Four skills of English affect English proficiency. Teachers with good English proficiency mean that they have good communication skill in the written or spoken context. This study aimed to find out teachers' English proficiency scores in terms of listening, speaking, reading, and writing and to investigate teachers' English proficiency problem in all those four skills. The researcher used mixed-method research. Tests and interview were used to collect the data. The population of this study was 132 senior high school English teachers in Banda Aceh. The researcher used simple random sampling for collecting quantitative sample and she chose 30 senior high school English teachers for this research. For chosing qualitative sample, the researcher used random purposive sampling. The researcher randomly selected 5 teachers who could participate in this study. Results showed that profile of English proficiency among senior high school in Banda Aceh was still in the average level of English proficiency level. On the other hand, teachers faced many barriers in English proficiency in term of listening, speaking, writing, and reading.

KEYWORDS–Banda Aceh, four skills, English proficiency, English teachers, Senior High School

I.   INTRODUCTION

In the teaching and learning process, teacher and students' interaction play an important role because it will affect students' understanding of the materials. In doing interaction teachers should have a good English proficiency. There are several levels of English proficiency. According to Little (2007), English proficiency is divided into several levels; A1 (beginner), A2 (elementary), B1 (intermediate), B2 (upper-intermediate), C1 (advanced), C2 (proficient). The higher level of English proficiency the better communication will produce. Several studies have been conducted regarding English proficiency profile. Nuraenah et al. (2019) have researched the correlation between English proficiency and reading comprehension skill with scientific literacy skill in senior high school. It resulted several findings; there is a positive correlation between English proficiency and scientific literacy skill; reading comprehension and scientific literacy skill, reading comprehension, scientific literacy skill, and English proficiency all together. Canch and Renandya (2017) have researched "teachers' English proficiency and classroom language use: a conversation analysis study". The data analysis of this study showed a complex relationship between teachers' general language proficiency and their ability to use their proficiency to support students learning in the classroom. They also found that the teachers' English proficiency level affects the quality of teaching. They believed that teacher with a high level of target language proficiency are more competent in providing input for learners. Gul and Aziz(2015) have investigated about "Teachers' Level of Proficiency in English Speaking as Medium of Instruction and Causes for English Speaking Deficiency". This research discussed about teachers requirement to use English as a medium of interaction and teachers competencies in using English. The research found that teachers were poor in grammar and vocabulary, but they were average in fluency, pronunciation and confidence while speaking English.

II.   PROBLEMS

Some researchers have investigated the issue of teacher language ability in teaching English. Young et al. (2014, p. 3) characterize the language ability of many NNEST teachers such as the teachers only addressing a basic command of general English or the teacher use first language for a considerable proportion of the class period. It is because of their lack of English proficiency so that they are more comfortable and less embarrassed in speaking L1. They also feel that their students may not understand them if they use English. The use of the first language in teaching English also happens in Aceh. As researcher's observation in some senior high school in Aceh, many English teachers use first language (Bahasa Aceh) or second language (Bahasa Indonesia) in the teaching and learning process. Cullen (2002, p. 220) stated that teachers with low English proficiency will have difficulty with the classroom teaching procedures such as giving instruction, asking questions on text,

explaining the meaning of a word, responding to students' questions, and giving feedback to the students. The teachers with lower language skills will crucially lack of authority on handling their students and lack of self-confidence in the classroom. These will affect teachers' performance in the teaching process.In conclusion, students' English proficiency is affecting by their knowledge of language skills, teachers' English proficiency, and teachers' teaching strategies. The teachers' English proficiency takes an important role in the teaching process. The teacher with good English proficiency will be better in teaching rather than the teacher who is low English proficiency. Good English proficiency teachers' will produce students with a good level of English proficiency. They usually are more accurate, fluent and flexible in speaking English rather than the others with low level of English proficiency. Teachers with a high level of English proficiency are better to communicate in spoken and written contexts. They also have an opportunity to participate in many international events.

III.   LITERATURE REVIEW

Teaching and learning English as a foreign language need to be concerned by teachers in using a target language. One of the successful keys of teaching English is depending on teachers' English proficiency.The teacher's ability to speak English depends on the good outcomes of the teaching and learning process. Teachers should be good at speaking English because in transferring knowledge to the students should use good and clear instruction. Students' understanding of the material is affecting by teachers' language proficiency. According to Richard (2017, p. 2) "competency of English language teaching draw on content or subject matter knowledge, teaching skill, and the ability to teach in English-a skill that is usually influenced by teacher's language proficiency". It means that the better level of teachers' English proficiency will help them in preparing a better teaching.

Freeman (2016) said that the teachers who are native of their language teaching have an advantage in teaching the language rather than teachers who are non-native of their language teaching. Native English teachers will be good English teachers rather than non-native language teachers. Non-native English teacher is called a non-native English speaking teacher (NNEST). Canajarajah (1999, as cited in Richard, 2017) stated that almost 80% of English teachers in the world are NNEST, while many of them are experts in English and many are not. In Aceh, almost all English teachers are not native speakers of English.

STANDARDIZED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY TESTS :

In testing the English proficiency, some standardized tests are usually used to measure the English proficiency score and level. First, TOEFL which is used measure the level of English proficiency of nonnative speakers of English. It is required primarily by English language colleges and universities. Additionally, institutions such as government agencies, businesses, or scholarship programs may require this test. The TOEFL test currently exists in both paper format and a computer format.TOEFL test divided into four types such as PBT (Paper Based Test), CBT (Computer Based Test), IBT (Internet Best Test), and ITP (Institutional Based Test). According to Philips (2001) PBT and ITPTOEFL test including three sections which are listening comprehension, structure and written expression, and reading comprehension and scored on a scale of 217 to 677. IBT TOEFL test including reading, listening, writing, and speaking and score on a scale 30 for each skill and total score is 120. While computer based test version of the TOEFL test has four sections such as listening, structure, reading, and writing. CBT TOEFL test is scored on a scale of 0 to 300 points.

Second, IELTS test which is designed to assess the English language skills of non-English speaking students seeking to study in an English-speaking country. There are two versions of the IELTS test; the academic module and the general training module. The academic module is for the students seeking entry to a university or institution of higher education offering degree and diploma courses, while the general training module is for students seeking entry to a secondary school or vocational training courses. IELTS test is including the four English skills are listening, reading, writing, and speaking which are then averaged to give the Overall Band Score or final mark. Performance is rated in each skill on a scale of 9 (expert user), 8 (very good user), 7 (good user), 6 (competent user), 5 (modest user), 4 (limited user), 3(extremely limited user), 2 (intermittent user),and 1(nonuser).

Third, the TOEIC (Test of English for International Communication) is standardized English test-oriented towards professionals and companies. The TOEIC has two separate tests, the receptive English skill including reading and listening and another one is the productive English skill including speaking and writing. TOIEC listening and the reading test has a score between 10 and 990 while TOIEC speaking and writing has a score between 0 and 400.Next, CEFR (Common European Framework of Reference for Language) is one of the international language standards which is used to measure EFL proficiency (Suryani and Amalia, 2018). CEFR

describes the level of English proficiency that is divided into six levels starting from A1 for beginner level A2 (elementary), B1 (intermediate), B2 (upper-intermediate), C1 (advanced), and C2 (proficient). CEFR can be used to design more transparent foreign language instruction at the international level and it can be used in foreign language instruction in a multilingual society.Lastly is KET (Key English Test) is an assessment of Cambridge English proficiency designed to figure out English proficiency at a basic level. This test measures four English skills which are listening, reading, writing, and speaking. There is consist of 30 reading comprehension questions, 2 writing questions, 25 listening questions, and 2 parts of speaking. The total number of questions is 59 questions. Reading comprehension has 30 points, writing has 30 points, listening has 25 points and speaking has 45 points. The total points are 130 points. Each skill the students have a minimum score to pass; reading is 20 points, writing is 18 points, listening is 17 points, and speaking is 27 points. The total minimum points that have to be passed by the students are 82 points.

In this research, the researcher chooses the TOEFL test as the assessment to measure teachers' English proficiency. It is one of the standardized tests that usually used to measure English proficiency and is also appropriate for the advanced level.There four aspects that affecting English proficiency such as speaking, listening, reading, and writing. Speaking skill is the ability to express the idea, opinion, feeling, emotion and to communicate with other people verbally; Listening comprehension is a conscious act that is more than just hearing the sound from what the speaker said. The listeners have to concentrate on the message delivered by the speaker; Reading is a process of gaining the information and understanding the information or verifying the knowledge that delivers by the writer; and Writing is a process of sharing information, ideas, messages, or thoughts in grammatically correct sentences. Harmer (2004) stated that writing is the way to produce language and express ideas, feelings, and opinions.

IV.   METHODOLOGY

Participants: Since this is a mixed-method study, there are two kinds of samples used. 30 senior high school English teachers were chosen by using simple random sampling. They are helped in collecting quantitative data. After that, the researcher chose the qualitative sample from those 30 Senior High School teachers by using purposive random sampling. In this study, there were 11 teachers who have lower score of English proficiency tests.The 11 teachers purposively selected as the sample, but the researcher randomly selected 5 teachers who could participate in this study.

Instrument: In collecting the data, the researcher gave three tests to the teachers such as the English proficiency tests, namely TOEFL, the speaking test, and writing test. The TOEFL test that was given to the teachers is the PBT TOEFL test. The PBT TOEFL test was adopted from Longman Complete Course for the TOEFL test by Deborah Phillips; A speaking test was given to test teachers' interactive speaking by using interview assessment. In speaking skills, the researcher focused on evaluating five aspects such as grammar, accuracy, fluency, vocabulary, and content.Speaking test module was adapted from Jakeman and McDowell (2002). Writing test was design to measure teachers' ability to write in English in academic setting and expected them to present clear ideas. The researcher asked teachers to write an essay based on the topic that given by the researcher. Writing test was adapted from Philips (2001). The researcherselected 5 teachers from11 teachers by using random purposive samplingthat have a lower score of English proficiency tests and then interviewed them. The interview guide included 10 semi-structured interview questions. The interview guide was used to investigate the problems that face by the teacher in English proficiency test, speaking test and writing test.

DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURES:
In this study, the researcher used tests in collecting the data. There were three tests such as English proficiency test or TOEFL test, speaking skill test, and writing test. In this case, the researcher wanted to find out teachers' English proficiency scores, teachers' speaking skill scores, and teachers' writing score. The three tests were used to find out the profile of English proficiency scores among teachers. The test scores were ranked and tabulated in the table.The researcher also used interview in collecting the data. In this case, the researcher wanted to investigate teachers' problems in English proficiency test. The interview included 10 semi-structured questions.

V.   RESULTS
There are two data in this research. The first is about teachers' English proficiency scores such as TOEFL, speaking and writing scores and then teachers English proficiency problems that were obtained through interview.

Results of Teachers English Proficiency Score: From the tests result, it can be concluded that teachers' English proficiency had various categories with the score that they had. Most of teachers (30%) got poor category of listening test, 21 teachers (70%) obtained poor category in reading comprehension test, 43.33% or 13 teachers got very poor category in speaking test, and 12 teachers (40%) got fair category in writing test. Les of them got excellent category in the tests, 4 teachers (13.34%) for listening, 6.67% or 2 teachers in reading and speaking, while writing score in excellent category increase up to 26.67%. Then, none of them got not capable category.Based on the score of the test, it concluded that teachers' English proficiency still need to increase.

TOEFL Test Result : Based on the calculation, teachers' listening score had various categories. The score categorized into five categories such as excellent, good, fair, poor, and very poor category.There were 4 teachers who got excellent category (13.34%) and good category (13.34). Fair category was achieved by 5 teachers (16.66%). Then, there were 9 teachers who obtained poor category (30%) and 8 teachers who got very poor category (26.66%). The highest category was poor category and it achieved by 9 teachers. It can be concluded that teachers listening skill need to improve.

In reading comprehension, there were 2 teachers (6.67%) who got excellent category, and 2 teachers (6.67%) who obtained good category. There were also 2 teachers (6.67%) who got fair category. Then, many of teachers such as 21 teachers (70%) obtained poor category, and 3 teachers (10%) got very poor category.From teachers' reading score percentage, it can be summarized that most of teachers still have difficulties in answering reading comprehension test.

The overall TOEFL test result is ranging from 563 (the highest) to 393 (the lowest) with the average value is 443.9. There were 2 teachers (6.67%) who got the excellent category, only 1 (3.34%) teacher who got good category, at fair category there were 5 teachers (16.66%). There were 9 teachers (30%) at poor category, and the majority of teachers in this TOEFL test were in very poor category that was 13 teachers (43.34%).

1. **Speaking Test :**The date showed that 43.33% of 30 teachers who had follow the speaking test got very poor category of the test. It meant that 13 teachers got very poor category. There were only 6.67% of teachers who got excellent category. It can be concluded that teachers' speaking were not satisfying yet. They were lack of grammar mastery, fluency and some of them difficult in answering the speaking interview part two (individual long talk).

2. **WritingTest :**Teachers' writing score categorization indicates that there were 8 teachers at excellent category (26.67%) and there were 4 teachers (13.33%) who got good category. Then, there were 12 teachers (40%) got fair category and 6 teachers (20%) who got poor category. In writing test, there were no teachers got very poor and not capable categories. It can be concluded that, most of teachers achieved fair category and none of them got very poor and not capable categories. Nevertheless, still less of them got excellent and good categories, so that teachers' writing score was not satisfying enough.

The Teachers English Proficiency Problems: Based on the interview questions about the problems or difficulties in TOEFL, speaking and writing test, the researcher summarized the problems in the tests as follow.

1. **TOEFL Test Result**
   There are several problems that faced by teacher in listening test. Some of those are: Difficult understanding speaker accent, speed of speaking, difficult to focus on long talk recording, having bad memorizing skill, need of repeating recording. In structure and written expression, the obstacles are in terms of grammatical rule and feeling of hesitation to choose the answer. While in reading comprehension, the participants were having difficulty because of lack of vocabulary, having limited time to analyze long passage, and feeling hard in analyzing main ideas.

2. **Writing Result**
   The participants stated that there were limited difficulties, but there were some aspects they worried about the language used, grammatical rule, concept and content and essay organization.

3. **Speaking Test**
   Most of the teachers stated that speaking test is a difficult test. There were many problems that they faced in speaking test such as not enough time and less of preparation, having limited ideas, lack of

vocabulary, confuse of using grammar rule, content, seldom speaking English, panic and anxiety, pronunciation, and fluency.

VI.   DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This study examined profile ofEnglish proficiency among senior high school English teachers in Banda Aceh. The researcher successfully collected the data by using tests and interview as instruments to answer the research questions.The research questions asked teachers' English proficiency scores in terms of listening, speaking, reading, and writing and the problems faces by teachers in terms of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Based on the data from the tests of teachers' listening and reading were used TOEFL test adopted from Deborah Phillips (2001),there were five categories to categorized teachers' score such as Excellent, Good, fair, Poor, and Very Poor. In listening most of the teachers got the highest category of poor category by 9 teachers or 30%. There were 4 teachers (13.34%) who got excellent category. After that, in good category were 4teachers (13.34%) who got it. Next, there were 5 teachers (16.66%) who got fair category and 8teachers (26.66%) who achieved very poor category.Most of the teacher achieved very poor category of listening and reading. It can be concluded that their listening skill was not good. Meanwhile, teachers reading score also categorized into excellent, good, fair, poor and very poor. Most of the teachers got poor category by 21 teachers (70%), 2 teachers (6.67%) obtained excellent category, 2 teachers (6.67%) in good category, 2 teachers (6.67%) who got fair category, and there were 3 teachers (10%) who got very poor category. Teachers reading score percentage highly increase in poor category which meant that their reading skill need to improve.

Besides, the researcher also gave them speaking test adopted from Jakeman and McDowell (2002). According to the result, there were 2 teachers (6.67%) who achieved excellent category and there were also 2 teachers (6.67%) who got good category. Then, there were 6 teachers (20%) of fair category and 7 teachers (20.33%) who got poor category. The highest category that achieved by teachers was very poor category which achieved by 13 teachers (43.33%). From the data, it can be concluded that teachers' speaking score still very poor. Teachers' speaking ability is important for a successful teaching and learning process. Having good speaking ability helps teachers have a good communication with their students. Lastly, from writing test adapted from Phillips (2001) there were found that teachers' English proficiency score in term of writing score was quite good enough. There were 8 teachers (26.67%) who got excellent category and 4 teachers (13.33%) who got good category. After that, there were 12 teachers (40%) who got fair category and 6 teachers (20%) who got poor category. There were none of them got very poor category and not capable category.It showed that most of them got fair category of writing.

From the data of the tests, it can be concluded that teachers' English proficiency score in term of listening, speaking, writing, and reading was still not good enough.These finding in line with the statement of Canjarajah (1999, as cited in Richard 2017) stated that almost 80% of English teachers are NNEST (Non-Native English Speaking Teachers) while many of them are experts and many are not. The finding of this research showed that English teachers in Banda Aceh were NNEST and based on the tests data, they were not experts.In the theory of English proficiency level, Little (2007) divided it into several levels; A1 (beginner), A2 (elementary), B1 (intermediate), B2 (upper-intermediate), C1 (advanced), C2 (proficient). In this research, the researcher found that teachers got poor category for listening and reading, while in speaking they got very poor category and fair category in writing.Based on Little (2007) theory, it means that on average teachers' English proficiency level is B1 (intermediate). B1(intermediate) means that can understand the main point of clear standard input on familiar matter that occur in work, school, and environment. They can deal with most situations where the language is spoken,they are able to produce simple connected text on familiar topic, and they are able to describe experience, opinion, event and give explanation to it.Furthermore, the teachers answered the interview questions and they provide the answer about the problems that they faced in listening, speaking, writing and reading based on the tests they had followed. They faced several problems in listening, speaking, writing, and reading.

There were several problems that teachers faced in listening. The problems were difficult understanding speakers' accent, speed of speaking, difficult to focus on long talk, having bad memorizing skill, and they need repeating recording. These problems influence teachers listening score, so that most of them got very poor category.As Gul and Aziz (2015)result of study, there were several problems that teachers faced in speaking such as poor in grammar and vocabulary, average in fluency, pronunciation, and less confident. This theory was in line with the finding of this research. They faced problems in speaking such as not enough time and less preparation, having limited ideas, lack of vocabulary, grammar rule, content, seldom speaking English, panic and anxiety, pronunciation and fluency. They faced a lot of problem in speaking. Moreover, they also faced

problems in writing and reading. The teachers' writing problems were language used, grammatical rule, concept and content, and essay organizational. While reading problems were lack of vocabulary, limited time to analyze long passage, and difficult analyzing main ideas. All the problems that have mentions by the teachers influenced their English proficiency score in term of listening, speaking,writing, and reading. Canch and Renandya (2017) stated that Teachers' English proficiency level affect the quality of teaching and it also can support students learning. In this research, teachers English proficiency level was B1 or intermediate. The teachers need to improve their English proficiency level as C1 (advance), because it would help them produce a good quality of teaching.Based on the finding of the research, the researcher concluded that profile of English proficiency among senior high school in Banda Aceh was still in the average level of English proficiency level. The data from TOEFL test for listening and reading, speaking test and writing test showed that teachers' score were still not good. For listening 9 of them (30%) got poor category and reading 21 of them (70%) got poor category. Less of them got excellent and good category for listening and reading. Besides, they got the highest category in very poor category with 13 of them (43.33%) in speaking. Furthermore, teachers' writing score was better than other score. None of them got very poor and not capable category of the writing. They got the highest category of fair category which 12 of them (40%). It concluded that they were able to answer writing test better than the other tests.

On the other hand, teachers faced many barriers in English proficiency in term of listening, speaking, writing, and reading. They felt difficult in understanding the speaker's accent, the speed of speaking, difficult to focus on long talk, having bad memorizing skill and need repeating recording in listening. Then they also faced problems in reading such as lack of vocabulary, having limited time to analyze long passage, and difficult analyzing main ideas. Less of them also faced problems in writing. The problems were language used, grammar, concept and content, and essay organizational. Otherwise, they faced many problems in speaking than others. The problems were not enough time and less preparation, having limited ideas, lack of vocabulary, grammar rule, content, seldom speaking English, panic and anxiety, pronunciation and fluency. They faced a lot of problem in speaking.In conclusion, the profile of English proficiency among senior high school English teachers in Banda Aceh was still in below level. They also faced many problems in English proficiency.

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